

**Amendments to the Abstract:**

Please replace the Abstract with the following paragraph:

[044] A method and system for optimizing a netlist change order flow is disclosed, wherein a design layout created by a layout tool using a reference netlist is to be changed by a modified version of the netlist, and wherein both netlist netlists are hierarchical comprising. Aspects of the present invention include comparing the modified netlist with the original netlist outside of the layout tool, and automatically generating at least one change order based on differences found between the two netlists. After the change order is generated, the change order is then applied to the design layout to generate a modified design layout.